

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel original claims 1-81 and replace with the following new claims:

Claims 1-81 (Canceled).

82. (New) A blade mounting device comprising:
a rod having a saw blade slot defined therein,
first means for engaging a hole defined in a saw blade when the saw blade is disposed within the saw blade slot and
second means for locking the blade mounting device in a blade release position.
83. (New) A blade mounting device as in claim 82, wherein the saw blade slot is fixedly defined within the rod.
84. (New) A blade mounting device as in claim 82, wherein the first means is slidably disposed within an aperture defined in the rod and the first means is selected from the group consisting of a pin and a ball.
85. (New) A blade mounting device as in claim 82, wherein the second means is formed by:
a sleeve rotatably supported by the rod, wherein a slot is defined within a curved, peripheral side of the sleeve,
a pin supported by the rod and extending into the sleeve slot.
86. (New) A blade mounting device as in claim 85, wherein the sleeve is axially immovable relative to the rod.
87. (New) A blade mounting device comprising:
a rod having a saw blade slot and an aperture in communication with the saw blade slot,
a ball or a pushpin movably disposed within the aperture so as to be pressable against a longitudinal side face of a saw blade disposed within the saw blade slot,
a sleeve rotatably supported by the rod, and
means for ejecting the saw blade from the saw blade slot when the sleeve is rotated to a blade release position.
88. (New) A blade mounting device as in claim 87, wherein the rod further comprises a guide

slot, the sleeve comprises a pin slot and a pin is permanently disposed within the guide slot and the pin slot.

89. (New) A method for mounting a saw blade in a blade mounting device comprising:
rotating a sleeve about a rod from a blade locking position to a blade release position,
locking the sleeve in the blade release position,
automatically rotating the sleeve to the blade locking position when the saw blade is inserted into a blade slot defined in the rod, and
pressing a pressing member against a longitudinal side face of the saw blade when the sleeve is disposed in the blade locking position.

90. (New) A method as in claim 89, wherein the sleeve rotating step further comprises automatically ejecting an old saw blade disposed in the blade slot when the sleeve reaches the blade release position.

91. (New) A method as in claim 89, wherein the pressing step further comprises engaging a hole defined within the saw blade.

92. (New) A method as in claim 89, wherein the sleeve rotating step further comprises preventing the sleeve from axially displacing relative to the rod.

93. (New) A blade mounting device for mounting a saw blade comprising:
means for rotating a sleeve about a rod from a blade locking position to a blade release position,
means for locking the sleeve in the blade release position,
means for automatically rotating the sleeve to the blade locking position when the saw blade is inserted into a blade slot defined in the rod, and
means for pressing a pressing member against a longitudinal side face of the saw blade when the sleeve is disposed in the blade locking position.

94. (New) A blade mounting device as in claim 93, further comprising means for automatically ejecting an old saw blade disposed in the blade slot when the sleeve reaches the blade release position.

95. (New) A blade mounting device as in claim 93, wherein the pressing means further comprises means for engaging a hole defined within the saw blade.

96. (New) A blade mounting device as in claim 93, further comprising means for preventing the sleeve from axially displacing relative to the rod.

97. A blade mounting device comprising:

- a rod having a saw blade receiving slot immovably defined therein,
- a sleeve rotatably supported on the rod, the sleeve being axially immovable relative to the rod, and the sleeve being rotatable between a blade locking position and a blade release position, and
- means for locking the sleeve in the blade release position.

98. (New) A blade mounting device as in claim 97, wherein the locking means comprises a pin extending transversely from the rod and into a slot that is defined in a curved, peripheral side of the sleeve.

99. (New) A blade mounting device as in claim 97, further comprising means for pressing a longitudinal side face of a saw blade disposed within the saw blade receiving slot.

100. (New) A blade mounting device as in claim 97, further comprising means for engaging a hole defined in a longitudinal side face of a saw blade disposed within the saw blade receiving slot.

101. (New) A blade mounting device as in claim 97, further comprising means for forcing out an old saw blade from the saw blade receiving slot when the sleeve is rotated to the blade release position.